



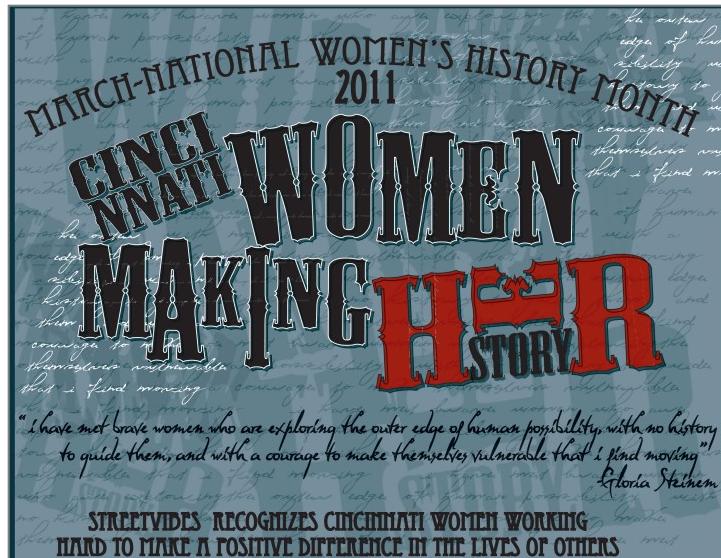
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ISSUE 265

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STREETVIBES

ADVOCATING JUSTICE • BUILDING COMMUNITY



Barb Wolf

JENI JENKINS
Staff Writer

For over 40 years Barb Wolf has worked to craft her career as a documentary activist or, as she refers to herself, a "documentarist". What began as an enduring curiosity in a 1960's Grailville bookstore, spurred on by members of the Catholic women's movement, ripened into a deep love for documenting human and civil rights transgressions and the people who fight them. According to Barb, in the 60's "Grailville was made up of powerful women who would watch what you were interested in" and incite your creative potential. These women, part of the international Grail movement which was established in Loveland in 1944, were committed to "the release of women's creative energy throughout the world" (grailville.org) and came together strictly "to change the world."

Upon recognizing Barb's interest, the women of Grailville asked her to make a slide show on the "changing role of women" and that is when she first learned about the women's movement. Barb had been involved in the anti-war movement and the civil rights movement almost from the beginning. In fact the civil rights march on Washington, D.C., in August 1963 was the first march she ever participated in. The Grailville slide show peaked her interest in the women's movement because "if women could begin to understand how they had been mistreated, they might begin to understand or expand their understanding to others who had been mistreated."

Wolf's involvement with the 1960's movements had a huge

impact on her life and work, leading her to make slide shows and films about other social issues including race and poverty.

"To be part of that- it was a freeing time. One of the things that I learned is to be open to change, because change is not bad. Look at the possibilities of change as opposed to fearing change."

Barb estimates that she has made 6-8 films a year for at least 40 years, resulting in 100's of films. Her work evolved and expanded in various directions over the years. In the early 70's she went to work for Cincinnati's Urban Appalachian Council and began teaching kids how to tape and edit shows on Appalachian culture. Word of mouth about her talents grew and each project led to other projects focused on giving people a voice. In the late 70's, for example, she did a training film for an organization working on establishing home health care providers for people who were wheelchair bound. Then with the 1980's AIDS epidemic, Wolf began making funeral videos for friends who had died after contracting the disease.

Barb worked on a number of projects with activist buddy gray, founder of Over-the-Rhine People's movement, including "These Old Buildings Raised Our Many Children" about "people who were moved around and used like pawns and placeholders in OTR when the gentrification was just beginning." Barb also worked with gray on a documentary on the history of the Drop Inn Center that was never completed due to buddy's untimely death in 1996.

As a champion for the rights of the oppressed, Barb has continually participated in demonstrations, rallies and marches. In 2000 Barb participated in the Trans-

Atlantic Business Dialogue conference demonstrations at Fountain Square where protesters peacefully rallied against corporate wealth and the decreasing wealth of the poor. Barb watched the protests with a camera so that "if something went wrong we could have it on tape" a tactic that has helped her fight the arrests of people who have been falsely accused. She also taped the 2001 Cincinnati riots and documented the civil unrest, which prompted her to tape virtually every demonstration that happened afterwards.

In September 2001, Barb united with thousands of anti-war protestors across the country as they demonstrated against in the impending invasion of Afghanistan. Barb was arrested for standing in the street and blocking traffic as she and others were "trying not to have that war happen because it was just so wrong." She says, "People literally poured out into the streets to say 'stop this', 'don't do it'. We had done everything else we possibly could have-and that's what we did and we got arrested and spent the night in jail." Barb was found guilty for disorderly conduct, despite the fact that she was calm, polite and non-violent. The appeals courts later threw out the case.

More recently, in September 2006, Barb was arrested in Steve Chabot's office as part of a nationwide movement calling on representatives to sign the declaration of peace. A judge found her guilty of criminal trespassing and sentenced her to 30 hours of community service, a sentence that she then protested because she didn't believe doing community service, which is often a life choice, should be made equivalent to punishment. Her refusal landed her 10 days in jail, an experience that she found fascinating and "wouldn't take it back for the world." While in jail she was able to speak with and interview dozens of good people who had done something wrong, people she says "shouldn't be there for a variety of reasons."

Barb describes her work as a "tool for understanding." When she documents people she attempts to "represent people in a positive fashion" so they can "see themselves and feel proud, once they see themselves it will empower them." She follows the philosophy of "We become what we behold" and believes "If someone sees themselves with dignity and respect they become that. That's what I do in

my work- and then of course I try to get arrested every once in awhile."

One video project she produced, Degrees of Shame, is on the exploitation of adjunct professors in higher institutions, modeled after Edward R. Murrow's film Harvest of Shame, a documentary on the exploitation of migrant farm workers. Barb sought to draw parallels between migrant workers and part-time professors in the "hope that they [professors] would look at migrant farmers and realize they are allies and they would try to help their cause."

Barb's current projects include creating a training video from the Streetvibes Distributors as well as a film documenting the lives of speaker's from the Coalition for the Homeless' Voice of the Homeless Speaker's Bureau. She is also making a



Barb Wolf's arrest during the local demonstration of the international protests against the 2001 War in Afghanistan. **Source: Unknown**

film on Mr. K's Math Camp in Cincinnati and is in conversation with Ohioans for Health, See Women, Pg. 3

20TH CENTURY DATES OF IMPORTANCE TO AMERICAN WOMEN

1900 Golfer Margaret Abbott is the first American woman to win a medal in the Olympics. At the Paris games, she takes the gold medal.

1916

Jeannette Rankin of Montana is the first woman elected to Congress, serving two non-consecutive terms. She casts the only vote in Congress against war on Japan after the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor.

1920

The 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, giving women the right to vote, becomes law when it is ratified by two-thirds of the states. The League of Women Voters is founded.

1921

Bessie Coleman becomes the first African-American woman to earn an aviation pilot's license & the first American of any race or gender to earn an international pilot's license.

1925

Nellie Tayloe Ross is the first woman governor of a state (Wyoming). In 1933, she is appointed first female director of the U.S. Mint.

1926

Gertrude Ederle is the first woman to swim the English Channel. Only five men swam the Channel before her, & she cuts two hours off their fastest time.

1931

Jane Addams is the first American woman to receive the Nobel Peace Prize. Addams is an advocate for the poor, a pacifist, a reformer & a feminist.

1932

Amelia Earhart makes the first solo flight by a woman across the Atlantic. She is the first woman to be awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.

1933

Frances Perkins is sworn in as secretary of labor. She was appointed by Franklin Delano Roosevelt as the first woman ever to serve in the U.S. Cabinet.

1935

Jacqueline Cochran is the first woman to break the sound barrier. During her career, she sets more speed & altitude records than any of her contemporaries, male or female.

1937

Rosa Parks is arrested in Montgomery, Alabama, for refusing to give up her seat on a bus to a white man, thus sparking the U.S. civil rights movement.

1942

Rachel Carson's book, Silent Spring, calls attention to the dangers of agricultural pesticides. It inspires a national environmental movement in the United States.

1943

Betty Friedan publishes The Feminine Mystique, which galvanizes the women's rights movement. The Equal Pay Act prohibits paying women less than men for the same job.

1944

Patsy Mink of Hawaii is the first Asian-Pacific-American woman elected to Congress. Margaret Chase Smith becomes the first woman to run for a U.S. presidential nomination on a major party ticket.

1946

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of race or sex.

1948

Shirley Chisholm is the first black woman elected to Congress. In 1972, she becomes the first black candidate for a presidential nomination on a major-party ticket (Democrat), & the first woman to run for the Democratic presidential nomination.

1950

Condoleezza Rice is the first African-American woman to serve as U.S. secretary of state.

1955

Lieutenant Colonel Eileen Collins is the first woman to pilot a space shuttle. In 1999, she becomes the first woman to command a space shuttle.

1957

Madeleine Albright is sworn in as the first woman U.S. secretary of state. Born in Prague, Czechoslovakia, she became a U.S. citizen in 1957.

2001

Elaine Chao becomes secretary of labor, the first Asian-American woman to be appointed to a president's Cabinet in American history.

2005

Nancy Pelosi is sworn in as the first female speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, one of the most powerful posts in the U.S. government.

2006

Captain Nicole Malachowski debuts as the first female demonstration pilot in the U.S. Air Force's air demonstration squadron team, the Thunderbirds.

2007

Hillary Rodham Clinton is the first woman to become a leading candidate for a presidential nomination, mounting a fierce challenge against Barack Obama, the ultimate winner of the Democratic Party's nomination & election. In 2009, Clinton is sworn in as secretary of state, becoming the first former first lady to serve in a president's Cabinet.

2009

Michelle Obama becomes the first African-American first lady of the United States.

2011

In the 111th Congress, a record 17 women serve in the Senate & 73 women serve in the House of Representatives. This total of 90 seats equals 17 percent of the 535 seats in Congress. In addition, three women serve as delegates to the House of Representatives from Guam, the Virgin Islands & Washington.

BY THE NUMB3RS

1964

The year Barbara Wolf first marched on Washington DC, in an anti war protest (Page 1)

1984

The year Jen Martin, the Editor of Streetvibes was born (Page 2)

8

The years Lea Drury has been in Cincinnati, committed to social work (Page 4)

2-25-2011

The day The Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless lead people in a rally to protest 3CDC's recent 'improvements' to Washington Park (Page 8)

26,000

The amount of messages that were sent by Amnesty activists to the Iranian government demanding the release of Roxana Saberi (Page 11)

88

How much beloved Mojo, a German Shepard-Rottweiler weighed (Page 12)

17

The age Cedric Cox began playing bass in a hard rock band, Morticite (Page 16)



North
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Street
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Association

JENNIFER MARTIN
Editor

I have decided that 'Streetwise' may not be the best name for this editorial. When I came on as Editor for Streetvibes that was the Editorial's name, so I just kept it; however after consideration I have decided it is a wrong fit for me. At the risk of offending anyone, let me just be the first to say I am probably not what one would consider 'Streetwise'. Therefore, since I haven't come up with a new title yet, the name will just be untitled for a bit. I look forward to sharing my opinions with you through this piece. I also thought it may be a good time to let you know what I am here to do, much like a company or group's mission statement, this is kind of mine...

I came to Streetvibes because I believed in the cause which it supports, my mission as Editor, is to simply advocate for the cause and use this newspaper as a means to get the message out there. I believe Streetvibes is an avenue to awareness. I want it to be something that someone donates a dollar for, and they actually get something out of. My intention is to continue the message of the community within and to make people outside of our core know the name Streetvibes. While I understand my point of view and my ways may be unusual to others, they make perfect sense to me and I think in time others will see where I am coming from. In an effort for transparency, you should know I don't think doom and gloom are always the way to go if you want someone to listen to your message. This is why now and in the future, especially in my Editorials, I may sometimes go for the lighter side of an issue. Again, this is all in an effort to simply keep people turning the page. I believe strongly I can bring different sets of eyes to this paper and as long as I do that, our message as a Coalition can only become louder. In the mean time, I encourage your thoughts, critiques, and comments on the paper. When it comes to me as Editor, I want to be transparent. I don't aim to be charming or cute, I aim to simply produce a good product, and my opinions are secondary to that. The things I write within an Editorial aren't to be taken as fact unless specifically stated, my opinions may not always reflect those of the Coalition and its staff, and what I do write may mean something very different to everyone as individuals. This is the reason I want your opinion on issues not necessarily about who I am. Really, with all the hate we deal with on a daily basis just watching the news...I am pretty spent on it, so you'll understand if the things I say from now on may be on a lighter and more positive note. Those thoughts will be relegated only to this box and it is called an Editorial. And aside from that I am completely aware of who I am and the fact that I know nothing in the grand scheme of things, I assure you I do not need to be told. I am also completely aware of my shortcomings and I think most would describe me as abrasive, loud, and blunt... and I tend to agree. I am all of those things. I was once given the back handed compliment that I was like a "pretty Kathy Bates" and trust me that was the nicest compliment that person could muster at the time, hardly cute or charming. I am however honest and I truly try my hardest not to judge others (as difficult as that can be sometimes), it isn't my style. I try not to judge and within the perimeters of my job, I try to listen and be fair.

I always want to hear what you have to say. I will always respond to a thought or concern if sent to me in a respectful way, so that a dialogue could start from differences. This is something that is important to me since I have not always been a member of this community or it's very strong core of nonprofit advocates. My email is printed to the right of this Editorial, so please if you do have something to say, send it my way. *I always want the reader's voice to be as loud as mine.*

Streetvibes is an activist newspaper, advocating justice and building community. Streetvibes reports on economic issues, civil rights, the environment, the peace movement, spirituality and the struggle against homelessness and poverty. Distributed by people who are or once were homeless, in exchange for a \$1 donation, Streetvibes is published twice a month by the Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless.

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The Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that works to eradicate homelessness in Cincinnati through coordination of services, public education, grassroots advocacy and Streetvibes.

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Women Making Herstory

Continued from Pg. 1

Environment and Justice on creating a film about the environmental effects of Fracking (hydraulic fracturing) in Ohio, and working on documenting the opening of the co-op coffee shop opening in Norwood in Fall 2011.

While Barb has never had an interest in film festivals and contests as the rewards that she gets are not from awards "it's when they [films] make a change," she received a videography award from the Contact Center in 1997 as well as the Maurice McCracken Peace & Justice Award in 2002.

She continues her work after all these years because she is "ridiculously hopeful." While she acknowledges she can't fix everything, she is optimistic about continually working for solutions to social issues. While she considers herself a "persistent follower... and rarely the spokesperson" she did lead and organize a project called Artists for the Drop Inn Center. Barb initiated the project as a

response to a comment she documented while filming a meeting of residents at the Drop Inn Center. The residents were asked to give input about Erich Kunzel's push to move the Drop out of OTR. One of the residents said, "Why do artists hate us so?" She thought it was so awful that they felt that, so she got together with a couple of other artists who pulled together 40 or 50 artists who supported the Drop and put on a concert together at Southgate House.

This visionary to be reckoned with was born in Wisconsin and raised in New Jersey and Michigan. She originally moved to Cincinnati in 1963 to pursue a BA in Math from Mt. St. Joseph College. She lives with her partner of 35 years, Michael Burnham, a Professor of Drama at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music.

Barb's films and videos tell many stories and document the struggles of our people over the last 4 decades. She plans on gifting her life's work to the historical society, to preserve this history.

Laura Osborn-Coffey

"You can write a letter, you can save a life. Take Action Now."



LAURA OSBORN-COFFEY

Laura grew up in Clinton County, Ohio, a Quaker stronghold. She credits this for her background in an activist life. As a teen she was involved in a 4-H horse club in Clinton County, and once she grew out of the club she volunteered as an advisor for a few years afterwards. The day she completed her Master's degree in Social Work at the University of Cincinnati in 1986, she and her fiancé watched "A Conspiracy of Hope" tour on TV. This rock concert was a benefit for Amnesty International, and featured artists such as Sting, Peter Gabriel, Brian Adams and U2. The show also carried the message in info-mercials by actors such as Robin Williams, Danny Glover and Whoopi Goldberg: You can write a letter, you can save a life. Take Action Now.

This concert incited Laura to send in her membership, and three months later she got in touch with the Local Group 86 in Cincinnati. In the mid 80's, Local Groups were also called 'Adoption Groups' as they would take on a Prisoner of Conscience case and work on it until the case was closed – either through a release, or due to the prisoner's death. "The first case we worked on was Mohamed Mghagha in Ethiopia. The group had his case when I joined, and we must've worked for at least 6 or 7 more years for him, until he was freed. When Mohammed was released, we had a big party with cake. We were so excited!" Laura remembers.

In 1987, Laura became the coordinator for the Cincinnati Local Group 86. The group was very active, and was in constant contact with the Amnesty office in Chicago, and later in 1987 she became the Area Coordinator for Ohio. This

role was a natural extension, as there were four active Amnesty International Local Groups in the state. In 1987 and 1988, she helped two new Amnesty Local groups to start in Dayton OH and Covington KY. In 1989 she began attending the 'Training of Trainer' program within Amnesty, which provided a training program to members to facilitate presentations and outreach for Amnesty to grow the movement. After going through this process, she did trainings at the local, regional and national levels, including workshops at their Annual General Meetings.

Three years ago, Laura was asked to join the Area Coordinator Steering Committee (ACSC) – a group consisting of one representative Area Coordinator from each of Amnesty's five regions, plus a Board member and staff. In this group, she has worked closely with the other representatives to award a national level award to the Amnesty Local Groups, called the Sister Laola Hironaka Award. The ACSC also works to develop workshops at the annual meeting for the Local Groups and the Area Coordinators, and adds strength to Amnesty's work with local groups and membership.

Laura is also a volunteer at the Maple Creek Artisan Center in Moscow Ohio (Clermont County) – she's done spinning and weaving demonstrations for their festivals over the past year, and she will be doing quilting workshops with them this year – for a change of pace. Maple Creek is a center for revitalizing the older arts, including pottery, blacksmithing, and other crafts.

She is still very involved in the Cincinnati Local Group and is the coordinator. "We do a lot of work for the Prisoners of Conscience – our current case is Dhondup Wangchen, a film-maker in China who was arrested after he made a video of Tibetan stalking about how they felt about the Dalai Lama. Dhondup is like the 'Indiana Jones' of China – he was imprisoned for making the video, then somehow he managed to escape from the Chinese Police for a short while, and managed to smuggle the video to a relative before he was again arrested and imprisoned. Who does that in China these days?" The Cincinnati group shares this case with a Local Group in Massachusetts, and last year the two groups collected over 2000 signatures on petitions on his behalf, with some help from the concert tabling worldwide. She's also in touch with student groups in the area, and is impressed with their energy and dedication.

"Amnesty volunteers don't stop, and we don't go away. 2011 is Amnesty's 50th anniversary. Our goal is to make the governments of the world realize that people around the world are watching when they arrest someone, torture someone, or execute someone, or even if they condone this behavior. The culture of human rights worldwide is growing and I am proud to be a part of that movement."

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Women Making Herstory

Lea Drury

JENI JENKINS
Staff Writer



LEA DRURY
Street Worker By Calling

In recent years our nation's streets have become home to thousands of homeless youth. The Queen City is no exception. While these individuals find their way to the streets for a myriad of reasons, from the lack of employment opportunities to running from troubled families, the bottom line is they are struggling to survive. Yet, there is some reprieve through the efforts of street outreach worker Lea Drury.

As a Case Manager for Lighthouse Youth Services, Lea provides compassion, hope and support. In her work, she engages people on the streets and when they are ready for services "I make it happen as quickly as I can and I get the barriers out of the way once they are in a position to use their own resources."

Lea provides outreach to anyone living on the streets and case management for those up to the age of 24. Each day Lea and fellow Case Manager Rashida Pearson scout Downtown, Over the Rhine, Camp Washington and surrounding neighborhoods. As they encounter people they offer water, food, blankets and condoms.

In her work, Lea's gift is her patience. When she meets people she doesn't rush them through the system, instead she

takes the time to "develop relationships with people" earning their trust. With a passion for helping people help themselves, Lea believes this is her life's work—"it's somewhat of a calling" and she doesn't think she would be happy doing anything else.

Lea sees herself as a positive entity, as part of a community and as a small part of a larger whole. She is someone who tries to contribute to solutions to making things better for the community as a whole. In 2009 she received the Literacy Center West Partnership Award, as a result of her commitment to her work and the strong working relationship she has developed with the center.

In the future Lea intends to design and implement re-education programs within the prison system "so people have more to work with when they get out." This vision was prompted by countless experiences with ex-prisoners on the streets. She cites a recent encounter with a 30-year-old man who had been in prison for 11 years. After serving his time "he was released and literally standing on the same corner he got picked up on." Lea sat down with him and did her best to refer him to community resources, "If he had been given a trade or a college education, he would have had the whole world. If he had received more tools, he could have worked."

Lea desires more "compassion for all people" within our culture. She recognizes that in our society homeless people are seen as unfavorable and "they are objectified and de-humanized." For Lea, a larger structural issue in our culture is that "there is a disconnect between the chain of command for funding—where the money starts and where the money ends up—because of poor communication." Each day Lea wakes up and continues her work because she receives considerable gratification from helping people, "I feel like I have a purpose. There is something more important than me past my front door."

Originally from California, Lea moved here for family 8 years ago. She will receive her Bachelor's degree in Social Work from the University of Cincinnati in December. She plans to immediately begin work on her Masters in Social Work. When she completes her degrees she will continue to work for Lighthouse, as she believes strongly in their mission.

As a woman teaching stage combat she has developed a number of specialty classes "Fight like a girl" and "Broad

Melissa Bennett

INTERVIEW BY CATIE DARGUE



MELISSA BENNETT

Melissa Bennett behind the scenes

The best way to describe Melissa is that she is everywhere, a part of everything, all the time; but no one necessarily knows it. "I can't imagine doing anything else with my life," she says. What exactly does she do? Well to be honest, everything. Melissa is a Cincinnati native who has worked everywhere from a bank to horse ranches to Target but is now mostly known for her work in the theatre. If you don't recognize her from the stage it may be because Melissa spends the bulk of her time behind the scenes.

A trained actress, she graduated with a degree in theatre from Bowling Green State University. A plethora of careers and opportunities took her to Colorado, Connecticut, Vermont, Las Vegas and even Ireland but she's always ended back in Cincinnati doing what she's best at: working in the theatre. She is now in her third season as New Edgecliff Theatre's Technical Director with a responsibility for building the sets and managing all technical aspects of the plays. Additionally, she teaches at the School for Creative and Performing Arts (SPCA), specializing in stage combat.

As a woman teaching stage combat she has developed a number of specialty classes "Fight like a girl" and "Broad

swords for broads" taking a physiological and physical look at the way in which women use their bodies differently in a fight and applying that to the stage. "Women move differently than men and they fight differently too." By studying how women act in a fight, stage combat can be completely altered to fit a character that is fighting and not just be taught to overlying tradition of male combat.

In the technical world Melissa notices the subtle way in which certain men try to steer her away from heavy lifting and manual labor, though she is a very able and willing carpenter, and towards more detail orientated tasks. But she doesn't let this affect her as she knows she's a capable stage hand, designer, teacher, actress, technical director, etc. Like many creative types she has a degree of dyslexia which can always be a challenge when working on a stage and when teaching students but she says she doesn't let it affect her work.

Inspired by such people as her parents, Aunt Lauri, Gina Klesattel at SPCA, Michael Schooner at New Edgecliff Theatre and the Showbiz Players, where she got her theatre start, Melissa is a true asset to this community. The enthusiasm to spread her love of theatre and her professional presence are some of her strongest qualities making her a natural leader. However, she is humble in her accomplishments and claims that her proudest moments have been shared with the Film Outside the Lines project where she works with people of varying disabilities to write, act and film movies. "There's no politics or stress, it's just enjoyable and it reminds me how fun this can be".

While she admits to wanting a little more security in her job, which the theatre world rarely offers, she says she believes in 'Karma jobs' and seems to always land on her feet. She loves theatre, the children she teaches and of course instructing someone to do a proper choke hold on stage.

Thank you!

For the past few months, Elizabeth Schulenberg has donated her time and design to Streetvibes, as Art Director.

Elizabeth works as a graphic designer in Montgomery, Ohio. Born and raised in Cincinnati, she earned her Bachelor of Design from the University of Cincinnati's school of Design, Architecture, Art and Planning. She now lives in a 103 year old Covington home with her husband (David), bulldog (Lily, pictured), and cat (Obie).

"We are out exploring whenever possible, whether it is around town on bikes, or camping/backpacking around the country. I love this area and being able to contribute to Streetvibes, and make Cincinnati even greater, is an amazing feeling. I have met a few Streetvibes vendors, and look forward to getting to know more of you!"



The Homeless Congress

Member Biographies

RICCARDO TAYLOR

The Homeless Congress of Cincinnati was created in January 2011, its mission, to become a voice for those who have the least in the way of a voice in our community. As an entity striving to work in the community for the purpose of change, the members of the Homeless Congress wishes to introduce themselves too the community as a whole.

Below are listed the Bio's of our current members. We would hope that our Streetvibes readers take note of their participation in community building and improvement as we engage in the revamping of our status as viable members of the community.

As listed, the following Congress members are the initial enrollment members and the core of what we feel will be a lasting and productive resource for our homeless population. Our members have given a short bio of whom they are and what they would like to accomplish as members of the Homeless Congress.



Riccardo Taylor....**Source: Amy Willhoite**

Lee McCoy

I have been homeless off and on many times over the years. As of late I have been living in my own apartment, to date it has been 13 month's. I have had my stint with drug addiction and have been fighting substance abuse for the greater part of my life. Today I am clean and looking for a new start on life. Working with the Homeless Congress I have picked my preeve, which is to see more being done with help in sheltering individuals during the cold months. The idea that a person is at least 75% water and that water freezes at 32 degrees puts a lot of people at risk. I believe that working with the congress in trying to convince the city and county authorities to create a winter shelter plan is an important obligation, and therefore I that being a part of the congress is a great way for me to have some influence.

Jerry Davis

I am currently unemployed but hope to attend Cincinnati State College this coming Fall Season. I am a member of the Garden St Transition Housing Board and believe that I can help in making a difference in our community by being apart of the Homeless Congress.

Keith Eutsey

As a member of the Homeless Congress I hope to be instrumental in the lives of others who have lived under homeless circumstances and who have suffered its disparagement. I would like to see more affordable housing and job training, as a result of my involvement with the Congress, being created.

James Brown

As a member of the Homeless Congress I would like to impact others in making changes in their lives. As a formally homeless person I feel my experiences can be useful in directing others through the difficulty, which is a part of that life style. The struggles that we face are hard and often seemingly impossible to burden. Our mindsets are often in disarray and we find ourselves in a dilemma. We resort to self-medicating with drugs or alcohol at time to relieve our sorrows and often find ourselves in more difficulty then we can manage. The displacement of individuals in our neighborhood, resulting from the recent rehabilitation of the buildings, is responsible for much conflict within agencies that otherwise support those in need. In our struggles I have one particular agency that I appreciate and support. The Drop Inn Center is in my opinion the "greatest", and all other like agencies are the immediate solution to some of the problems which so many people face. It is for this reason that I commit my time and effort as a member of the Homeless Congress.

Stephen Gentry

I am a native Cincinnatian and product of the Cincinnati Public Schools with three years of college. I have had a varied career in the service and production industries. I am currently disabled and have found meaningful and fulfilling satisfaction through Homeless Advocacy because of a volunteer position at the Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless and membership in the Homeless Congress.

Due to the circumstance, which I would suggest goes with the territory; I find that it is necessary to install the Bio's from our members in segments. Our members have very full lives for the most part, and given that circumstance they are usually quite busy and coupled with the provision of space bios of the rest of our membership will be posted in future editions.

The Homeless Congress is made up of individuals who for the most part are struggling with poverty issues and find themselves under pressure financially and the Homeless Coalition offers some relief for that. It is therefore that some of our Congress members are also involved with the coalition through their participation with the Streetvibes paper program; their involvement with the propagation of issues, which affect those most at risk due to poverty, is plus for membership with the congress.

March Madness

What we are losing in Over the Rhine

LEE MCCOY

It's that time of the year again and 65 teams are scrambling to see who going to be number one. The fans will be cheering, some may be crying but with the way this game is played it won't be a basketball team that winds up the winner. It will undoubtedly be the bookies. This time of year seems to make people do crazy things...like we got a little spring in the air to bring out the madness in us all.

That said, let's another walk through my neighborhood. And I guess I should say that my hood is no longer my hood with the renovation of Washington Park. We are watching all of this construction to the tune of 47 million dollars, but the when I look at the park I just trees being dug up. 47 million can't replace those...to me they are priceless. And while we're on the subject of digging up priceless things let's just call to light that they dug up people buried in my hood, they moved them or put them in a new hole in the earth all together. I always thought it was sacrilegious to disturb the final resting place of someone who has passed on, but apparently 47 million dollars and the greedy promise of more revenue must make all spiritual guidance go out the window.

I suppose if you are 3CDC you can pretty much get with anything, right? The scariest part of all is watching groups like City Gospel Mission get bumped out of the community. And now because of it close location to The Performing Arts School; I fear the writing is on the wall for the Drop Inn Center. Whatever happened to love thy neighbor? I guess greed really will make that moral compass and spiritual guidance dissipate. I am sorry 3CDC but just because a person is down on their luck doesn't make them a nuisance, they are still human. You came into Over the Rhine on a mission of greed. You have taken buildings and made them into your fancy 'flats'. Your fancy condos that no one who has lived here their whole life could afford. And you mean to tell us you aren't forcing people out of this community? These fancy apartments will likely run \$800 to \$900 a month for a one bedroom. Bear in mind, one of these buildings I am referring to used to rent a one bedroom for \$200 a month. It's been my experience that you come upon your real estate ventures in a shady way like telling a landlord that in order for them to purchase the building they must evict or relocate the tenants already there. You don't even pretend to give people a chance. That's cold.

I'm pretty sure it is all about the Benjamins for you people. You have your casino coming in and the bigger picture is becoming clear for Cincinnati. You can just take a look at Vine Street and see that this isn't Over the Rhine anymore. It is also clear that they will do anything they can to move us out...but why? So the rich can get richer by saving gas money getting to and from their Downtown work places? And don't get me wrong, with the price of gas I totally understand that argument but really, what happens to the rest of us? What happens to the people who gas isn't a problem for because they don't have a car to put it in?

And now I hear they are going to have to pay a Guard to patrol Washington Park. Why is that, so you can keep certain people out? It just doesn't sound right to me. I have never heard of a public park with an armed guard. What's more is that we could be losing some of the oldest social service agencies, essentially fixtures in Over the Rhine for nearly a century. These organizations literally put food in the mouths of the community's homeless and poor. I know that when I was homeless I was damn glad to 6:15 because I knew that I could have a hot meal and then spiritual services following that fed my soul and enriched my spirit. When you homeless and down on your luck, sometimes that spirituality is all you need to pick your chin up and go through another day. You see the one thing about Over the Rhine is that as a community, we cared about each other. You can hardly name another place in the tri state that will feed those in need, clothe those in need, or give you a shower when you need it. Places like The Free Store, Hamilton County Department of Job and Family Services, The Salvation Army...these places are priceless without greed. I know God will look after His own, but I for one will truly miss the Gospel Mission. I wish them all the blessings in the new move but I know they will be greatly missed in Over the Rhine.

San Francisco Homelessness

A look at the same issue by the Bay

JIM LUKEN



Ahh. San Francisco...the romantic City by the Bay. I spent two weeks there in mid-February, and like so Tony Bennett (and many others), I left my heart there. The biggest part of my heart went out to the city's homeless population, which is one of the largest in the country. One might think that homelessness is homelessness no matter where it occurs. But what I observed in San Francisco had a very different look and feel to it than it does here in Cincinnati.

While the city has twice our population, there are many more homeless people there than here, and these homeless are quite visible, almost everywhere throughout the cosmopolitan city. Surprisingly to me, most of the homeless are white and in their 40s and 50s. Many push shopping carts around wherein they store their belongings. I saw several men with wheel chairs hooked up to their carts and small bicycles strapped on top. In the famous "Haight/Asbury" neighborhood, the homeless population is mostly young and white kids from all over the country. Many of these—I was told—are runaways. Often they are unwelcome in their family homes, by reason of their LGBT identities. The accepted (politically-correct) name for them is "queer kids." Call it a form of reverse prejudice, but I had problems dealing with healthy looking white kids panhandling all over town.

There are many reasons for the high numbers of homeless in SF. The city is a kind of magnet, due to its (relatively) warm weather all year long, and its massive transit system, and perhaps mostly due to its being in a traditionally "liberal" city in a state (California) that is famous for its free-wheeling lifestyle.

Although San Francisco is technically in Northern California, its climate borders on temperate. The Pacific Ocean currents bring generally mild temperatures. One evening there was a smattering of snow. After leaving a bar, I gathered a small snowball from the windshield of a car. My buddy was amazed, because snow almost never happens there. Many days the temperature was in the low sixties, with the sky a postcard blue.

What this means is that chronically homeless people (95% male) can sleep outside all year long without endangering their lives. The huge finger of Golden Gate Park runs four miles from the ocean to the heart of

the city, incredibly green and wonderful to walk in. On several of my walks, I followed narrow paths through the grass, only to find a homeless encampment tucked away, tarp covered, 4'X 6', a shopping cart often holding up one end of the tarp. My buddy told me that there are men who have lived out in the park for years and years. San Francisco's equivalent to Over the Rhine is called the "Tenderloin District," nestled downtown very close to the major business district. Imagine OTR situated between Central Parkway and the library. There, on Turk Street, I found the office of the "Coalition on Homelessness" which publishes of the newspaper, called "Street Sheet" You press an intercom button and someone rings you in. Then you climb a long flight of shabbily carpeted stairs to the offices.

According to Bob Offer-Westort, the editor of Street Sheet, people flock to San Francisco in the hope of getting a better shake from the city's support network. He says they are mistaken in this belief, describing the city laws and authorities as "punitive."

Perhaps "punitive" can be best illustrated by referring to the infamous "Sit/lie" law which was enacted this past November. Bob says that their "Coalition on Homelessness" campaigned vigorously against the law, which empowers the police to arrest/harass homeless people for sitting on (or sleeping on)the pavement. There have already been two demonstrations against the law since its passage.

Fortunately, the law is not currently being enforced, although Bob says that may change with the installation of a new police chief in March. No doubt the homeless population is anxious about enforcement. I saw hundreds of people all over town sitting on curbs and sidewalks. And at night, I would walk around the homeless sleeping under blankets in doorways and alcoves.

I was pleased to hear Editor Bob Offer-Westort praise our own newspaper during my interview with him.

to see that Benni was reading my recent story on the "Shooting at Tucker's" in Streetvibes, which is mailed to SF's homeless coalition office each month. Benni described homelessness in his home town as "a bad situation. And it ain't getting any better."

On Market Street, the main downtown artery, I walked up to a man pushing a shopping cart. The temperature was in the low forties that day. The first thing I noticed was that he was wearing flip flops with no socks. Handing him a dollar, I asked if I could interview him for Streetvibes. He said, "Sure."

His name was Terry Adale, white, age 56. Tall, thin Under his hooded sweatshirt, I could see that Terry was movie-star handsome, with clear blue eyes. He chewed on butt of a cigarette that hung from his lower lip.

He had been out on the streets of San Francisco for twenty years now, a transplant from Chicago. He said he had had a typical childhood there, had done well at school, and had even done some college work.

"When I lost my job there, I decided that—if I was going to be homeless—there were better places to be than Chicago."

I was surprised to learn that he never sleeps in any of the city's shelters. [There are 1100 beds in the SF shelter system]. He said he usually slept in the same doorway several blocks east on Market Street. He never begs, and supports himself by recycling. He said he can generally make \$10 or more each day.

"Food is easy to find," he said.

"You mean, like, at soup kitchens?" I asked.

"No, I mean on the street, in trash receptacles. You wouldn't believe some of the food people throw away in this city."

When I inquired about the flip flops, he complained that he had gone to the hospital recently and they had taken some of his clothes, including his shoes and socks



Sharon Randle **Pamela Gerard**

He described Streetvibes as among the "first tier" of homeless newspapers.

Street Sheet prints 16,000 (12 page) newspapers in San Francisco, compared to Streetvibes' 3,500 (16 page). They have around 230 vendors (40 regulars) compared to our 35 vendors. Bob expressed envy at the fact that Streetvibes vendors now wear vests. His San Francisco vendors are not even provided with identification badges.

As I left the editor's office, I met the Street Sheet circulation manager, Benni Clyburn, who works with the vendors. I looked down on his desk, and was amazed

without ever returning them.

"Didn't you ask about them?"

"I guess I should have," he responded.

He said he was "relatively" satisfied with his style of street life. "The lottery is my principle means of hope," he ventured.

I asked Terry if he had anything to say to our readers in Cincinnati.

"I urge people to be friendly and healthy, as well as they are able." Then he padded off in his flip flops.

The Struggle for Doing Good

JAMES DEMARIO BROWN

My name is James DeMarioBrown. I am one of the members of the Homeless Congress. I'm trying to impact the lives of those who are homeless in our community. From personal experience, I know being homeless is hard. It is truly an everyday struggle just to meet basic needs and it is so hard to keep the right mind set while doing so. Some people give up, fall into drugs and alcohol for comfort when nobody else is there to rely on. This I know, and my message is that there is a way out. One of the best resources in the community by far is The Drop Inn Center. It is a place where you feel comfort and supported in your hardest of times. Lately, with the closing and relocation of The City Gospel Mission has me wondering if 3CDC's development in Over the Rhine has just put the writing on the wall for The Drop Inn Center. Where

will all these people who are genuinely helped by The Drop, I wonder where they will go, who will they turn to for help? This kind of desperation can only breed more outrage and violence. Pushing the people out is not the answer. The people in this community need a boost, not an eviction notice. Where's our bail out? Where is our development? Where are our jobs? We need the support of others. We need resources like The Drop Inn Center. With the recently formed Homeless Congress, we intend to work on the issues. Ultimately, we hope to get in front of Cincinnati's City Council because right now it seems like there is no one there playing on our team. My struggle for doing good continues and yours should too. Speak out whenever you can, help whoever you can, and maybe together we can get our voices heard.



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Fighting Poverty: The Impact and Future of the AmeriCorps Program

Current Legislation

BETH GRIFFITH-NIEMANN

Faces without Places AmeriCorps VISTA

AmeriCorps members make a yearlong, full-time commitment to serve non-profits or public agencies, while living in poverty themselves, but proposed budget cuts are threatening this program.

On February 19th, the House of Representatives passed legislation that would completely eliminate AmeriCorps and all other service programs supported through the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). The House Appropriations Committee compiled a Continuing resolution totaling \$4 billion dollars in cuts over two weeks, keeping the government operating, preceding a vote on the budget cuts in the Senate, until a long term bill can be agreed upon. The Senate is set to vote on the issue on March 18th; however, it seems likely that the budget will not be resolved and that the current fiscal year may function with a series of continuing resolutions until the end of the fiscal year in September.

It is unclear what the final outcome will be for AmeriCorps and CNCS.

Current Impacts

AmeriCorps is comprised of AmeriCorps State & National, AmeriCorps VISTA, and AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) totaling over 75,000 individuals each year who pledge to serve their country through national service. AmeriCorps is one of many organizations that receive funding from CNCS; other organizations include Senior Corps, Learn and Serve America, Nonprofit Capacity Building Program, the Social Innovation Fund, and Volunteer Generation Fund. All of the programs provide an outlet to serve the nation for over 1.5 million individuals across the nation.

AmeriCorps members work hard to serve the needs of the poor, help create lasting change, lead and manage volunteer projects, and help others obtain education, as well as many other services that impact their community. In our country's time of economic need, some explain their service is even more vital.

"I can't think of a bigger bang for our government's buck. I hope the cuts don't fall there [on AmeriCorps]" explains Diana McVey Wood of the American Red Cross.

Barbara Wallace of UC Clermont states that AmeriCorps members, "provide an invaluable service to our organization; they are highly educated, skilled professionals." The AmeriCorps program allows non-profits and government agencies to focus on their services to clients rather than staffing specific programs. By having an AmeriCorps member working at the non-profit, the budget is opened and money can be provided to other parts of the organization because CNCS provides a living stipend (in lieu of salary) to the AmeriCorps member. There is no cost to the non-profit organization.

Local Impacts

There are over 1,400 AmeriCorps members working to better their communities through service in Ohio. These members are working to meet educational, environmental, health and economic needs of the state.

AmeriCorps VISTAS work to increase the capacity of non-profits by recruiting volunteers, fund raising, expanding the services provided, as well as creating sustainable programs. Tracy Power, President of Faces without Places, a Greater Cincinnati non-profit that works to raise awareness and funds for children and youth experiencing homelessness explains how their AmeriCorps VISTA has helped their organization.

"Because the Faces without Places Board of Trustees is volunteer based, our VISTA's efforts have been invaluable to our organization, which is dedicated to removing the barriers to education for children and youth experiencing homelessness. It is essential to maintain our VISTA in order to continue promoting the mission of Faces without Places in the Greater Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky area. As the critical need for awareness, services, advocacy and funding have increased due to the economic instability facing many families; our VISTA has made great strides by engaging a constituency of donors and community supporters. Our VISTA has been very successful with her efforts to educate stakeholders and community interest groups about the plight of the 'homeless child' by visiting board rooms, classrooms, evening meetings, and church groups. Building capacity while educating the general public about the issues and long-term impact to the community as a whole is a vital component of the work our VISTA has dedicated time, resources and energy. Discontinuing the national AmeriCorps program and losing our VISTA will impede efforts for a 'call to action' in the Greater Cincinnati area that is bringing this devastating issue to the forefront."



My first rally **Source: Catie Dargue**

Future Impacts

The impact of an AmeriCorps member's service outlives that of an individual's time within AmeriCorps. A 2008 study by CNCS found that AmeriCorps Alumni are more engaged in their community and are more likely to continue a life of public service. The report explains, "Not only does AmeriCorps provide individuals with opportunities to help address their communities' most pressing needs, but the program also spurs individuals to be agents of positive change in their communities long after their AmeriCorps service".

Shelley Werner, an AmeriCorps Alum explains that even now, years after her service, that she "cannot see the 'good life' without volunteering; it an essential part of my life after AmeriCorps."

The life of an AmeriCorps member is far from glamorous, as members live and work in poverty; but payment is not the goal or the reward for AmeriCorps members; serving their community and country is payment enough.

Voice your opinion, contact your representatives:

Sherrod Brown (Senate) (202) 224-2315

Rob Portman (Senate) (202) 224-3353

Steve Chabot (House, District 1) (202) 225-2216

Jean Schmidt (House, District 2) (202) 225-3164

Michael Turner (House, District 3) (202) 225-6465

My first rally

Musings of an outsider looking in

CATIE DARGUE

My mom and dad were hippies. There's no better way to describe them. In fact, growing up, all of my friend's parents were hippies, we just never really thought of them like that- or if we did it was in a past life, somewhere off before we were born. I've never seen my parents protest or rally for something they believe in, but it seems like the sort of thing they would do. Fist in the air, yelling at "the Man" - it just seems appropriate

for my parents. For me, it's never been something I've done, but something I've always felt compelled to do. It must be in my blood and that's why in 1999 and later in 2001 when riots in Seattle broke out I felt compelled to 'join the people'. It was an overwhelming sense that I needed to have my voice heard and my presence felt to send support to my fellow protesters. I never did get a chance to go to Seattle during that time and until Friday February 25th I had never been to a rally.

On February 25th the Coalition for the Homeless led the people in a rally in front of 3CDC's offices in Over-the-Rhine to have our community voice heard.

The mission: to make people aware of 3CDC's resistance to work with the community on a number of issues surrounding their recent 'improvements' to Washington Park

Having lived in London where it seemed like there is a protest weekly or perhaps being inspired by the recent events taking place in Egypt and Wisconsin, I felt in the mood to rally. It was a great turn-out with 40-50 people in attendance. Media was poised with cameras and microphones while the police and 3CDC looked on in the background. It was everything I imagined. Chanting in chorus in support of the common belief

See Rally Pg. 9



Vanessa Sparks Speaks Out for Washington Park
Photo by: Catie Dargue

My first rally

Continued from Pg. 8

that "We the people" of OTR will not silently sit by and watch as our park slowly disappears. One of my favorite moments was when a local passer-by on bike stopped to see what all the action was about and ended up staying for about 10 minutes to help support the cause. People left and right seemed moved by our cause, cars honked and we said our piece. The speakers were elegant and to the point; an

overall great success.

As tensions have grown, 3CDC has made several attempts to appear as if they support "the little guy" by sponsoring such events as the Cinciditarod, which benefited the Freestore Foodbank and helping to finance the completion of the Jimmy Heath House, which helps homeless individuals recover from addiction by providing them with a safe home and supportive environment. To me these resemble clever

marketing ploys designated to distract the public's attention from the real issues and the amount of hurt they are causing in Over-the-Rhine simply by turning their backs on the very vibrant yet impoverished culture that already inhabits this neighborhood. This rally, this coming together of people of all racial and financial backgrounds, was a truly beautiful and moving experience. To fight for simple rights like a place for the people

of the neighborhood to use the bathroom with dignity, despite what 3CDC claim about there not being the space, location or wanting to maintain such a space, is our right. It's our right to ask why none of the supposed 900 jobs are easily accessible to the people in this neighborhood who need them most. We chant, "Washington Park is the people's park, not just your park". We fight for the last open park in this area which now has been reduced to a, treeless, fenced off

construction site soon to house a parking lot and 'Dog park'. Broken promises and a cold shoulder to the community have provoked us to rally.

My first rally was a short one, a productive one, a powerful one. My first rally was one that my aging hippy parents would be proud of to know that, "We the people" have not lost our voice to a corporate sold out America. My first rally was and eye opener and by no means will my first rally be my last.

PEOPLE'S PLATFORM FOR EQUALITY AND JUSTICE

"We want to see development, but we don't want to be pushed out." —Nannie Hinkston (1995)

1. We want neighborhoods where all citizens are respected and appreciated for who they are. We don't want to be overpowered by corporate interests. We believe healthy neighborhoods have real democratic decision-making power. We believe empathy and the quest for understanding are core values for social life.

We live in a time marked by extremes and suffering, where city and corporate practices too often reduce human beings to deficits and end up punishing, demonizing, criminalizing, and making people disappear.

2. We want full employment for our people with meaningful jobs and livable wages. Millions upon millions of public and private dollars are being invested in Cincinnati's urban neighborhoods, resulting in new jobs. A reasonable percentage of these jobs must come to local residents.

3. We want policies, legislation, and development projects to reduce the gap between the rich and the poor.

We believe that wealth and power are now mobilized to keep our most vulnerable citizens at arm's length, and not for the purposes of ensuring basic human rights. Too many city policies treat these excluded citizens as threats and take strides to:

- * criminalize panhandlers and people who are homeless;
- * push them into the prison-industrial complex;
- * remove them from sight and displace the Drop Inn Center (see point #6 below);
- * enact police sweeps and invasive surveillance;
- * regulate public spaces (no Streetvibes distributors on Fountain Square);
- * impose a gentrified culture on the marginalized.

Under this system those citizens among us made most vulnerable must fend for themselves.

4. We want the renovation of Washington Park to welcome all citizens and to be maintained as a genuine public space.

The current plan demolishes the deep-water pool and basketball court—recreational facilities that neighborhood people wanted to keep. Who is the park for, exactly? We don't want public spaces turned into private assets.

5. We want the assault on Metropole residents to stop.

Over the last 20 years, downtown Cincinnati has lost a significant number of affordable housing units. We want those units restored. The Metropole has 224 such units. Metropole residents have put up a valiant effort to save their homes. If relocation must occur, we demand residents be relocated in the downtown core—in their own neighborhood—and receive full relocation benefits.

6. We want the assault on the Drop Inn Center to immediately stop.

The City/3CDC alliance continues to pressure the Drop Inn Center to relocate out of the neighborhood. This pressure puts the city in violation of its own *Over-the-Rhine Comprehensive Plan* (2002) to protect all current residents from displacement. Our homeless brothers and sisters have a right to be fully integrated into our neighborhoods and not to be used as pawns by development schemes.

7. We want commercial development that serves existing neighborhood residents.

Mixed-income neighborhoods need to have shopping opportunities for all income levels. In neighborhoods like Over-the-Rhine, for example, not all new commercial development should cater to people with higher incomes. This is not an argument against high-end boutiques and bars, but a challenge to attract neighborhood-serving businesses to meet the needs of lower-income residents as well.

8. We want our urban core neighborhoods to be racially and economically integrated with housing options affordable to all income levels.

When low-to-moderate-income areas experience upper-income development, benefits to the poor are few. In fact, often low-income individuals are displaced. The market alone does not create economic mix. We want to see a greater multiplicity of housing options that can serve lower-income people such as cooperatives, multi-generational housing, renter equity, housing for the elderly, shared-function housing, and land trusts.

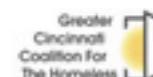
9. We want an auditing system in place to make sure that the mixture of household incomes called for by participatory neighborhood plans are on track.

New upscale development is picking up in Over-the-Rhine, West End, Lower Price Hill, and Walnut Hills. The market left to its own devices will not produce balance. Low- and moderate-income housing needs to be diligently secured and protected with incentives, policies, and legislation.

10. We want "Shared Equity."

As neighborhood developments attract more and more investment, both private and public, an enormous hike in property value will likely result. We want an innovative system that uses that increased property value to benefit low-income residents and the non-profits in our neighborhoods.

We need new narratives in Cincinnati about how life can be lived differently, supported by values of empathy, community, solidarity, and inclusivity. We remain steadfast that conversations across borders are life-transforming. Social change happens when the included come to see and truly understand the excluded, when the haves come to understand the have-nots, and when the centers of power come to understand the margins. Change occurs when those with privilege come to see and understand those who are disadvantaged, to walk with us, and to learn from us, because when this happens, power is not coercive. Rather, power is used to mutually benefit everyone.



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No Quiet Old Age for South Africa's Grannies

Grannies are indispensable in South Africa. They may have been hoping for a restful old age, but the AIDS epidemic has seen them taking on motherhood for a second time, caring for grandchildren whose parents have died of the disease.

ELLES VAN GELDER

Despite her aching joints, 76-year-old Thandiwe Matzinga moves swiftly through the small corrugated iron home she now shares with three of her grandchildren: twin boys (15) and a seven-year-old girl whose mothers died of AIDS. Matzinga supports them and herself on government grants of 300 euro per month. Matzinga raised nine kids of her own, three of whom have died of AIDS. She's one of South Africa's many grannies who care for their grandchildren.

South Africa has been hit hard by the HIV/Aids pandemic; 5.5 million people, around 18 percent of its population are infected. According to UN figures for 2007, there are 1.4 million aids orphans in the country, 64 percent of them being raised by their grandparents, usually single grannies.

In a community centre near her home in the township Khayelitsha outside Cape Town, Matzinga takes her place in a circle of wrinkled faces. Talking in the Xhosa language, the women share stories about how it has been for them to lose their children. They are part of the organization Grannies Against Poverty and AIDS (GAPA) that has around 500 members.

All these ladies thought their kids would take care of them when they would be old, but instead the tables have turned. "A lot of these grannies have five to ten mouths to feed from their old age pension," says Vivienne Budaza, director of the organisation. "Their kids are dying like flies," she sighs.



Granny Nothemba Mdaka in front of her small home in the township Khayelitsha, near Cape Town. She has lost two children to HIV/AIDS and a third one is dying. Mdaka raised five grandchildren and is now raising five great grandchildren. **Source: Elles van Gelder**

The grannies get together regularly in the GAPA offices for mutual support; there they discuss their burdens and the disease that is destroying their families. "The grandmothers know that you contract HIV/Aids via sex", says Mrs Budaza. "But there are still myths and misunderstandings. A lot of grannies for example, don't understand that there are kids who are HIV-positive. How can they have the disease if they never had sex?"

We then need to explain that a kid can contract the virus while in the womb."

It's both a social as well as a financial struggle for the grannies to make ends meet. HIV/Aids is still stigmatized in South Africa. "When my neighbors heard that kids of mine died of the disease, they didn't dare to use the same communal toilet as me," Matzinga says. But slowly, she feels, this is changing. "More and more families around me are hit by HIV/Aids. There are more and more grannies in the same situation asking for my help."

Another granny taking care of lots of children is 71-year-old Nothemba Mdaka. But her small home is temporarily quiet. She has sent her grandkids and great grandkids away because one of her daughters is dying of HIV/Aids in the back bedroom. She doesn't want the children to see the suffering. It is her third daughter who will die of the disease.

Mdaka raised five grandchildren and is now raising five great grandchildren while her grandchildren are looking for work. Bringing up teenagers has been difficult for her. "A lot of youngsters in the townships use alcohol and drugs and there is a lot of crime," says Budaza of GAPA. "And the number of teenage pregnancies is so high." One of Mdaka's grandchildren had her first child when she was 15. She is 20 now and has three kids. "She says she wants to have healthy children before she gets HIV-positive," says Mdaka. At first she didn't dare talk to her grandchildren about sex, but now she even hands out condoms. "We need to be open about this. Otherwise this killing disease will never stop."

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The Street News Service (SNS) is an innovative online news agency that brings together the best of street paper journalism from around the world. INSP also works with media partners Reuters and Inter Press Service (IPS) who support the Street News Service by providing supplemental news features and photographs.



Granny Thandiwe Matzinga together with the three of her grandchildren she takes care of in her shack in a township near Cape Town. She's one of South Africa's many grannies who care for their grandchildren. **Source: Elles van Gelder**

Women and Human Rights

LAURA OSBORNE-COFFEY

Amnesty International celebrates Women's Rights day on March 8th annually. Amnesty members worldwide often celebrate by activities such as rallies, letter writing activities, and demonstrations for women's rights worldwide. When people today think of women and human rights, they often think of historical figures such as Dorothy Day, Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman, Susan B. Anthony, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Or perhaps they think of more recent prominent women – Wilma Mankiller, past chief of the Cherokee tribe. Winnie Mandela, wife of Nelson Mandela. Rosa Parks and Coretta Scott King, who had key roles in the Civil Rights battle. Amnesty works on behalf of women's rights worldwide, and has called for the United States to become signatory to CEDAW (Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women), along with the rest of the western world. Amnesty also has a campaign to 'End Maternal Mortality' as a part of their current 'Demand Dignity!' campaign.

Amnesty International knows that there are currently many women worldwide who carry the strength and dignity of their beliefs and their work with them on a daily basis, as they work towards their own goals – and the goals of their family and their community. Some of these women are people whom Amnesty members have worked for and are now released; some are currently in prison and are a focus of ongoing human rights work. These women are featured below:

Successes:

Roxana Saberi, Iran

Amnesty was happy to report in 2009 that American-Iranian journalist Roxana Saberi was freed from prison in Iran! Roxana had originally been given an eight year prison sentence on trumped up charges of "espionage," following a brief closed-door trial in Tehran. Amnesty International had issued an urgent action calling for her release. When an

urgent action is posted by Amnesty on its website, members worldwide take immediate letter writing action. Over 26,000 messages were sent by Amnesty activists to the Iranian government demanding her release.

Ma Khin Khin Leh, Burma

After serving nearly 10 years of a life sentence in Myanmar (Burma), prisoner of conscience and long-time AIUSA priority case Ma Khin Khin Leh was also freed in 2009. Ma Khin Khin Leh is a school teacher and young mother, who served a life sentence because her husband helped plan a demonstration to be held in Bago on July 19, 1999, to show support for the National League for Democracy (NLD), a pro-democracy political party that sought to counter the military junta that had reigned over Myanmar since 1962. Days before the demonstrations were to take place, authorities took action to halt it. Failing to find her husband, security agents arrested Ma Khin Khin Leh and the couple's three-year-old daughter instead. Although her daughter was released after spending five days in detention, Ma Khin Khin Leh - then age 33 - was eventually transferred to Insein Prison. In December 1999, the Insein Special Court sentenced her to life imprisonment under vaguely-worded security legislation. Even by the normally harsh standards of "justice" meted out by Myanmar's military government, the life sentence given to Ma Khin Khin Leh was extreme. Ma Khin Khin Leh was the AIUSA Midwest Region's Special Focus Case since 2005

Aung San Suu Kyi, Burma

Human rights activists in Cincinnati and worldwide were thrilled and grateful for the release on November 13, 2010 of Aung San Suu Kyi in Myanmar (Burma)! The government released her after seven and a half years of house arrest. Aung San was the nationally elected leader of Burma in 1989, and has been under house arrest by the Burmese government for most of the time since then. Amnesty volunteers worldwide worked on her

case many times, the most recent being over the last seven years. James Roberts, Amnesty international Co-group chair for Myanmar stated up on her release: "Will she re-form the National League for Democracy? Will she continue to advocate for democracy? Will her release be for good this time, or will the government find another reason for imprisoning her yet again? Only time will tell." What is known is that there are over 2,200 other political prisoners who are still behind bars in China.

IMPRISONED:

The women discussed below have been arrested or detained as recently as last week. One has been an Amnesty concern for years and the other only recently arrested, both are in China; and WOZA has been a subject of harassment in Zimbabwe for years.

WOZA, Zimbabwe

Women of Zimbabwe Arise marching in Harare, Zimbabwe "WOZA"

On March 1st, 2011, members of civil rights organization WOZA were targeted and arrested by police in Zimbabwe. Seven members of WOZA and MOZA (Men of Zimbabwe Arise) were arrested at their own homes. One of the women arrested was a nursing mother who has been denied access to her child. When visited by their family, several of those arrested indicated they were subjected to beatings on the soles of their feet. This is a torture method called 'falanga' and is a common instrument in the torture arsenal of Zimbabwe police.

Fourteen more women were arrested on March 2nd. Four are WOZA members, the other 10 are not. They were merely in the wrong place at the wrong time. The wrong place was a meeting to contribute \$1 to a burial society fund. At this time, not all of these women are accounted for as they have been taken to several different police stations. According to WOZA "police officers, some in full riot gear, visited the homes of another 6 members but they were not home."

Mao Hengfeng, China

Activists worldwide were originally pleased to hear of the release of Mao Hengfeng, a Shanghai-based human rights defender. She was released from Re-education Through Labor (RTL) on medical parole on 22 February 2011, as she had suffered from the effects of torture while imprisoned since March 2010. She has high blood pressure and had evidence of bleeding in her brain, due to torture. The relief was short-lived however, as on February 24 she was sent back to RTL on the grounds of having violated the terms for medical parole. According to her husband, Shanghai Yangpu district police came to their house on 24 February 2011 and said they wanted to talk with Mao Hengfeng, and she was informed by the police that she had committed activities which violated the terms of her medical parole, and was being sent back to RTL. Mao was not allowed to change her clothes or pack anything she needed before being taken away. She is again at risk of torture. Since 2004, Mao Hengfeng has been repeatedly detained for her work defending women's reproductive rights and victims of forced evictions, and her support of human rights defenders. Often her family has not been allowed to visit her and they have since found out that it was at these times that she has been tortured.

The human rights situation around the world continues to change rapidly. One constant is Amnesty's 50 year commitment to upholding human rights. Jenni Williams of WOZA said this about Amnesty: "I am alive today after 33 arrests because members of Amnesty International sent ... text messages, they phoned; they faxed the Zimbabwe Republic police. They made a huge difference. It caused those police to say – let me not torture them today, let me not rape them today, let me not beat them today because they have friends in Boston."

SAY WHAT?

IN HONOR OF WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

"THE WORK OF THE POLITICAL ACTIVIST INEVITABLY INVOLVES A CERTAIN TENSION BETWEEN THE REQUIREMENT THAT POSITION BE TAKEN ON CURRENT ISSUES AS THEY ARISE AND THE DESIRE THAT ONE'S CONTRIBUTIONS WILL SOMEHOW SURVIVE THE RAVAGES OF TIME."

-ANGELA DAVIS,
RADICAL BLACK ACTIVIST, EDUCATOR
& PHILOSOPHER

Mojo The Great

B. CLIFTON BURKE

"There might be stronger dogs and faster dogs in the world, and many of these will have decent ball skills themselves, but to find another dog with the combination that Mojo possessed is damn-near impossible. That dog could play."

Not an ordinary dog, Mojo had the strength of many men and could crash through drywall for a tennis ball. In his prime, he was a beast with a hemi V8/400 horsepower engine. His playing weight was around 88 pounds, but he could hang with the fastest dogs on the block no matter what the size. Obstacles? Over or through them. Objection? The ball. Nothing stopped him and his career lasted a solid eight years or so of high-caliber play and an unmatched tenacity to make catches. He is, without question, the greatest I've ever seen and my all-time favorite.

He was a German Shepard-rottweiler puppy, six-weeks old, on the east side of town and he was handed to me by a man I had never met before or since. The man wanted him to go to a good home and I gave him my word. Once Mojo grew out of his fluffy, awkward puppiness, he almost right away became the legend we remember him as today.

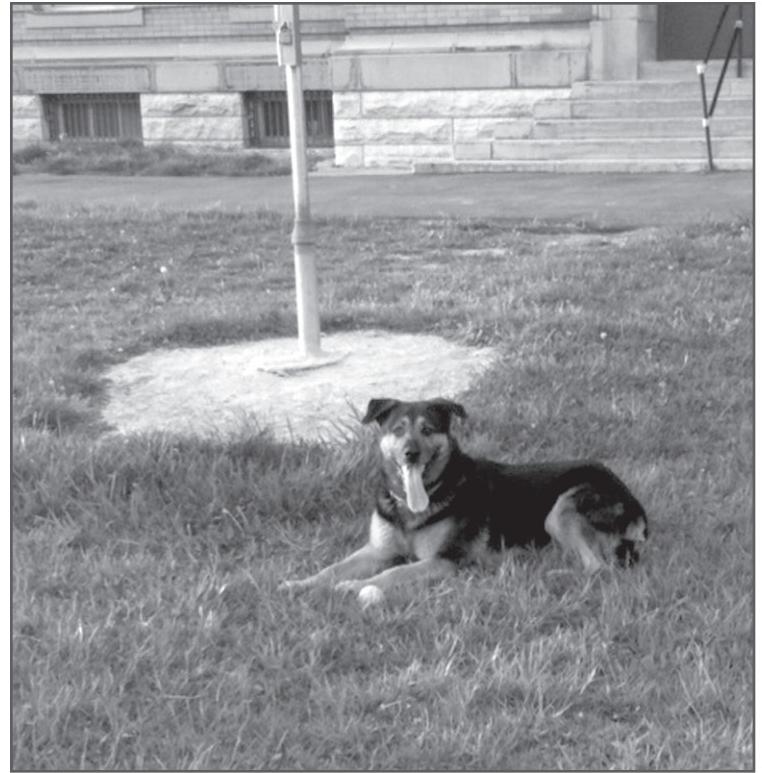
The routine trips to the park weren't much of an option for me. A day without going meant

a day of him blasting around the apartment being too big and too excited to ignore. So we went. Every day for years and years and years. There he turned his haunches into muscled pistons, his front legs into those of a race horse's, and would thrash the turf between himself and the ball with supernatural force. Our areas quickly became either swampy mud islands or clouds of dust from his powerful running style. And, during his athletic peak, I could never wear him out. Never. I could throw the ball until my arm fell off and he would be back with it at my feet smiling up at me with his obscenely large tongue, waiting for the next throw.

He was never a frisbee dog; he didn't have the patience to wait around for it to land. And he would chase the kong, but didn't like the unpredictable bounces it took—even though I did. The tennis ball was his obsession and he went through hundreds of them. The sport was that I throw it and he'd catch it on a bounce. For a long time I couldn't over throw him, he was a bullet. A large black bullet.

It wasn't just at the park either; Mojo also had an indoor finesse game that he constantly tricked human beings into playing. His placement on people's laps, on armrests, on the very ledge of an end table, was most impressive. Once the ball had been expertly placed, the human would be distracted by conversation or television or whatever and lightly toss the ball to Mojo. He was a master at getting his way in this regard. He tricked me a million times or more.

There were a couple of ways he played indoor. If it were a close range toss right at him he would snatch it with no problem. In fact, you could put a little heat on your throw, and release it as close as a foot from his face, and he would envelop the ball like a first-baseman's mitt. If it were a lob intended to lead him into a certain direction, that too was no problem, as he could make over the shoulder snags, shoe-string catches and leaping grabs (but only when he had to). He was respectful of wires and electric fans but disregarded everything else around him. Many, many spilled drinks and other disasters



came about because of Mojo's recklessness, but it was part of who he was and I rarely stopped him.

If the game was a kicking one, he showed excellent blocking technique by moving his broad chest low to the ground and spreading his legs out wide. He was especially good at using his paws to deflect kicks attempted to go past him. I also enjoyed watching him roll the ball around on the ground for a while with his paw; smash the balls into the floor until it squirted out and then collect it on the backspin he anticipated. It reminded me of a skateboard

trick, or spinning a basketball on your finger—pointless, but cool. Eventually, he slowed down some in the twilight of his life, taking things easier but never giving up all the way. Up to the very end, he played ball at the park and still loved it.

There might be stronger dogs and faster dogs in the world, and many of these will have decent ball skills themselves, but to find another dog with the combination that Mojo possessed is damn-near impossible. That dog could play. The best of all time.

He stays in my heart.

The Sandwich Man

Jeffery Hass

BY: JIMMIE GIPSON

Jeffery Hass has been giving back to the community for years. He doesn't volunteer at a local shelter or work for a nonprofit, he gives back in the simplest but most appreciated way; by bringing vending machine sandwiches, cakes, pops, and milks down to the Lord Gym, Lord Pantry, Washington Park, and The Drop Inn Center.

He faithfully does this every day, gathering food from local vending machines and bringing them down into the community and simply handing them out to those who need it. And those who need it, well they will be there...waiting patiently for their treats.

It is truly heartwarming to see the love and genuine gratitude on their faces when The Sandwich Man arrives. This is a blessing in our community that he will do this day after day and year after year. So I would like to salute The Sandwich Man. Please don't stop giving your time and generosity to the community. What you do is incredible and we LOVE you for it. You remind me of the Candy Man, only better.

MY ODE TO THE SANDWICH MAN

Who can make you happy?
And fill your tummy too?
The Sandwich Man can
Who?
The Sandwich Man can
Cause he mixes it with
love,
So everyone can be full
Yeah, the Sandwich Man
Can

I Am Eve and Woman for You Do I Cry!

AUTHOR: ELISA HILL

Taken from His rib, I am Eve!
Because I was the first to eat the apple, I am forever in sin, diseased.
I give birth in pain and fire.
I am beaten when ever men desire.
I am stone when he needs a wall to cry.
I am alone in this world and to kneel is to survive.
I am Eve, the first of many.
I am the one who disobeyed.
You should not suffer for the mistakes I have made.
I am Eve, queen to Adams throne.
I am the one to whom, they all should throw stones.
I am Eve unto each new day.
I am Eve and my soul craves the shade.
You should have peace and tranquility to guide your way home.
With honor and wisdom to know that you women are not alone.
I accept my faults to which I lie.
I accept my results that in this world today, I too am still alive.
To suffer for the rights I made wrong,
to ask for forgiveness through the Son.
Where forgiveness bleeds long,
I am your retribution and their revenge.
I am Eve and yes I am still a woman.
God, forgive me for falling prey.
Please reach down and deliver me from this hell to which I lay.
I am Eve and woman for you, do I cry!

Lyric Spotlight



"Feel it falling off like clothing. Taste it rolling on your tongue.
See the lights above you glowing. Oh and breathe them deep into your lungs.
It was always simple, not hidden hard. You've been pulling at the strings,
Playing puppeteer for kings. And you've had enough.
But the search ends here, where the night is totally clear.
And your heart is fierce, so now you finally know,
That you control where you go. You can steer.

So hold this feeling like a newborn. All the freedom surging through your veins.
You have opened up a new door. So bring on the wind, fire and rain."

-Missy Higgins "Steer"

If you would like to submit lyrics that have spoken to you or helped you through a difficult time, please send them to jenmartin@cincihomeless.org

CAN YOU

WILLA DENISE JONES

Can you shut 'em down? Does the world believe that this is the world's solution

Can you shut 'em down? Keeping factory's open with no work, now that's pollution

Can you shut 'em down? The free clinics, people homeless, no more Drop Inn Center

Can you shut 'em down? Washington Park, the sanitation workers, I can't help but litter

Can you shut 'em down? Over the Rhine was white then it was black, I thought we were all together

Can you shut 'em down? I'm confused so tell congress I really thought they knew better

Can you believe in your heart that the decisions of our country are either republican or democratic?

Can you believe that out of all the people in the world two simple parties be worthy of so much static?

Can you close your eyes to the reality of the fear that has such a tight grip on our nation today?

Can you keep living shut down and shut up? I'm baffled but not lost for words I can honestly say

For me, learning to live without doubt or fear in my life and keeping God so close to my heart

I have no doubt that without God's blessings this world is doomed to fall completely apart

With much faith and without any regards for the republicans or democrats controlling my being

Without any doubt what so ever today I know that almighty God is the only real thing

So can you shut 'em down? Now slow down and take the time to think, what do you really understand?

You need to come back into the days of Adam and Eve and remember when only God ruled the land!

FEED ME SEYMORE... FEED ME ALL NIGHT LONG! BY JENI JENKINS

The title of this column is taken from the 1986 film "Little Shop of Horrors," where a plant keeper must meet the demands of a ravenous plant that feeds on humans. Instead of plants that feed on people, this column is for people who feed on plants!!

ZESTY MEXICAN RICE

I'm a sucker for Mexican food, have been for years. Unfortunately, since turning vegetarian almost 5 years ago I have struggled finding a Mexican restaurant that serves authentic VEGETARIAN Mexican cuisine and I had my suspicions as to why this was. My suspicions were confirmed on a recent vacation to Mexico. While in Cozumel my girlfriends and I sought out a place to dine for lunch and discovered this cozy little Mexican eatery. To my dismay the restaurant had only 1 vegetarian option, stuffed peppers, which I disappointingly ate, while they savored their meaty options. Sadly, I may never get to enjoy the "real" flavors of Mexico unless I decide to eat meat again. Lucky for me, a few years back I started exploring how to make a quick and easy Mexican rice dish and came up with this. I hope you enjoy! Serving size, as a main dish 5-6 bellies.

Ingredients:	Cost at Kroger:
1 11oz container garden fresh gourmet salsa	3.99
2 cups water	
3 cups instant rice	1.64 (½ box)
4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil	.60
2 cloves fresh garlic, minced	.20
½ white or yellow onion, chopped	.50
16 oz. shredded Mexican style cheese	1.67
1 (15 oz) can Mexican style diced tomatoes with chiles, undrained	.75
1 (15 oz) can black beans, rinsed and drained	1.05
1 (15 oz) can whole kernel corn, rinsed and drained	.70
1 cup crushed tortilla chips	.50
Approximate Cost:	11.60

- Mix water and salsa in a sauce pan- bring to boil. Add instant rice, stir, cover and remove from heat.
- Heat 2 tablespoons olive oil in a large skillet over medium low heat and sauté the onion and garlic 3-4 minutes until the onions turn translucent.
- Add tomatoes, beans and corn and cook an additional 3-4 minutes or until heated through, remove from heat and combine with the cooked rice.
- In a bowl, toss the remaining oil with the crushed tortilla chips.
- In 9" x 13" baking dish coated with cooking spray, layer the tortilla chips and then the rice mixture.
- Sprinkle with cheese.
- Heat in 350 oven for 15-20 minutes or until cheese is melty.
- Voila, FEED!



University of Cincinnati Students Skip the Beach this Spring Break

UC's Spring Break Takes Students Around the World, Including Service in Haiti

DAWN FULLER

Dawn.Fuller@uc.edu

An adventure blending sun and fun over spring break is a longtime college tradition. But dozens of University of Cincinnati students are planning trips to destinations affected by earthquakes, hurricanes and mudslides, including two trips to the devastation in Haiti.

UC's spring break is the week of March 21. Students in several courses will continue their academic study beyond the classroom and around the world. Others are looking ahead to some hard physical labor as they offer service in areas that are struggling to recover from natural disasters.

"I've never been on the typical spring break trip, but I feel like I've experienced so much more through my trips with Serve Beyond Cincinnati (SBC) and through helping people," says Lindsay Long, co-president of the student service organization. Long will be leading SBC's first trip to Haiti over spring break. "I love being on these 'first' trips, because we never know what to expect." Here's a roundup of where UC students will be serving, studying and traveling over spring break.

Here are some of the places UC students will be serving, studying, and traveling over spring break. To see a complete list of the destinations go to: www.uc.edu

UC Alternative Spring Break Trips

Serve Beyond Cincinnati Trips

Serve Beyond Cincinnati (SBC) is a UC student organization that strives to build an emerging, civic-minded generation by providing national and international service experiences for UC students. The organization founded by UC students is planning five service trips over spring break.

Balan, Haiti

Ten UC students will be working with the Fuller Center for Housing in a town just east of the capital of Port-au-Prince. "We will be building the first house in this village, a home for a family displaced by the earthquake," says Lindsay Long, UC senior biological sciences major and SBC co-president, who are leading the trip with fellow co-president Lane Hart, a UC junior who is majoring in information systems and finance. The cost of the trip per student is approximately \$1,600. Students will be departing Cincinnati on March 18 and returning on March 26.

"Service and academic study will have UC students pursuing adventures around the nation and the world as they plan their spring break."

San Luis Talpa, El Salvador

Ten UC students will continue their three-year relationship of working with the Fuller Center for Housing, a nonprofit, ecumenical Christian housing ministry dedicated to eliminating poverty housing worldwide. The team will be building a home for a family in a developing community – a project they also tackled on their first trip to the region. On this trip, they are also planning a two-day adventure involving surfing lessons and exploring the village markets. The trip runs \$1,500 per student. They'll depart Cincinnati on March 18 and return on March 26.



Service in Haiti **Source: Serve Beyond Cincinnati**

Webster Parish, La.

Twelve SBC members will be working in partnership with the Fuller Center for Housing as part of a three-year tradition of taking service-centered trips to this region. The cost of the trip is \$300 per student. They'll depart Cincinnati on March 19 and return on March 26.

Kansas City, Mo.

As SBC takes its first trip to Missouri, 12 UC students will work with the Fuller Center for Housing and a local affiliate to build a home for a family. The cost of the trip is approximately \$300 per student. They'll depart Cincinnati on March 19 and return on March 26.

St. Louis du Nord, Haiti

This UC service learning experience is themed, "Restoring Hope in Haiti." Twenty-four students will travel to the region as part of a trip in partnership with the Northwest Haiti Mission. Students will take part in three areas of outreach: volunteering with children's educational and athletics programs, assisting a clinic, and supporting community development. As part of their planning, a drive for everyday medical supplies is being led by trip coordinator Cheri Westmoreland – director of the McNair Scholars Program under Student Affairs and Services. The drive is collecting children's Tylenol and Ibuprofen, anti-fungal cream, antacids and vitamins. "Even the most common everyday over-the-counter medications are lifesaving in Haiti," says Westmoreland. The supplies are being collected at Swift Hall, Room 700. The cost of the trip per student is \$1,800. Students will depart Cincinnati on March 17 and return on March 24.

Rabinal, Guatemala

The UC College of Business and McMicken College of Arts & Sciences Romance Languages Department lead this service learning course in partnership with Habitat for Humanity Guatemala. As 20 students build a home for a family in Guatemala, they'll practice and improve their skills in speaking Spanish while observing issues of culture, social issues and the economy. The cost per student is \$1,700, which includes a \$500 individual donation to Habitat for Humanity International. Students were encouraged to apply for grants from UC International and the Charles Phelps Taft Research Center to offset travel costs. Students will depart Cincinnati on March 18 and return on March 27.

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching names UC among 115 American colleges and universities for its 2010 Community Engagement Classification. The foundation issued the announcement earlier this year, naming UC among 35 research intensive universities to receive the classification.

Shelter: Women and Children

Central Access Point	381-SAFE
Cincinnati Union Bethel	768-6907
300 Lytle Street, Cinti, Ohio 45202	
Bethany House	557-2873
1841 Fairmount Ave, Cinti, Ohio 45214	
Grace Place Catholic Worker House	681-2365
6037 Cary Ave, Cinti, Ohio 45224	
Salvation Army	762-5660
131 E. 12th Street, Cinti, Ohio 45202	
YWCA Battered Women's Shelter	872-9259

St. Francis Soup Kitchen

Churches Active in Northside

4230 Hamilton Ave, Cinti, Ohio 45223

FreeStore/FoodBank

112 E. Liberty Street, Cinti, Ohio 45202

Madisonville Ed & Assistance Center

4600 Erie Ave, Cinti, Ohio 45227

Serves area codes: 45226, 45227, 45208, 45209

St. Vincent de Paul

1125 Bank Street, Cinti, Ohio 45214

Treatment: Men

Charlie's 3/4 House

2121 Vine Street, Cinti, Ohio 45202

Prospect House

682 Hawthorne Ave, Cinti, Ohio 45205

Starting Over

961-2256

Treatment: Women

First Step Home

2203 Fulton, Cinti, Ohio 45206

Treatment: Both

AA Hotline

351-0422

CCAT

381-6672

830 Ezzard Charles Dr. Cinti, Ohio 45214

Joseph House (Veterans)

241-2965

1522 Republic Street, Cinti, Ohio 45202

Hamilton County ADAS Board

946-4888

Recovery Health Access Center 281-7422

681-0324

Talbert House

641-4300

Advocacy

Catholic Social Action

421-3131

Community Action Agency

569-1840

Contact Center

381-4242

1227 Vine Street, Cinti, Ohio 45202

Franciscan JPIC

721-4700

Gr. Cinti Coalition for the Homeless

421-7803

117 E. 12th Street, Cinti, Ohio 45202

Intercommunity Justice & Peace Cr.

579-8547

Legal Aid Society

241-9400

Ohio Justice & Policy Center

421-1108

Faces Without Places

363-3300

Stop AIDS

421-2437

Health

Center for Respite Care

621-1868

3550 Washington Ave, Cinti, Ohio 45229

Crossroad Health Center

5 E. Liberty St. Cinti, Ohio 45202

Health Resource Center

357-4602

Homeless Mobile Health Van

352-2902

McMicken Dental Clinic

352-6363

40 E. McMicken Ave, Cinti, Ohio 45202

Mental Health Access Point

558-8888

Mercy Franciscan at St. John

981-5800

1800 Logan St. Cinti, Ohio 45202

NAMI of Hamilton County

458-6670

PATH Outreach

977-4489

Other Resources

Center Independent Living Options

241-2600

Emmanuel Community Center

241-2563

1308 Race St. Cinti, Ohio 45202

Peaslee Neighborhood Center

621-5514

214 E. 14th St. Cinti, Ohio 45202

Franciscan Haircuts from the Heart

381-0111

1800 Logan St. Cinti, Ohio 45202

Goodwill industries

771-4800

Healing Connections

751-0600

Mary Magdalen House

721-4811

1223 Main St. Cinti, Ohio 45202

People Working Cooperatively

351-7921

The Caring Place

631-1114

United Way

211

Women Helping Women

977-5541

Off The Streets

421-5211

Hamilton/Middletown

St. Raephael's

863-3184

Salvation Army

863-1445

Serenity House Day Center

422-8555

Open Door Pantry

868-3276

Northern Kentucky

Brighton Center

859-491-8303

799 Ann St. Newport, KY

ECHO/Hosea House

859-261-5857

Fairhaven Resuce Mission

859-491-1027

Homeward Bound Youth

859-581-1111

Mathews House

859-261-8009

Homeless & Housing Coalition

859-727-0926

Parish Kitchen

859-581-7745

Pike St. Clinic

859-291-9321

Transitions, Inc

859-491-4435

Welcome House of NKY

859-431-8717

205 West Pike Street, Covington, KY 41011

Women's Crisis Center

859-491-3335

VA Domiciliary

859-559-5011

VA Homeless

859-572-6226

Shelter: Men

Art to Empower

Cedric Cox's work celebrates the positive

"The more personal you make your work the more universal it becomes, and the more it will resonate in others," is what Terrence Corbin, then professor at the University of Cincinnati (UC), told once Cedric Michael Cox studying under him. Cox never forgot this advice and all of his artwork since has been a genuine reflection of his life, of who he is, of what he believes in, of what he would like to achieve in this world.

Artists as Activists

By SAAD GHOSN
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Born in Dayton, OH, Cox, an African American visual artist, lived most of his life in Cincinnati. He attended Indian Hill Schools from first grade on and later UC, graduating with a Bachelor's degree in Fine Arts, majoring in painting and drawing. Art from the beginning was his refuge, his mode of expression and of self-assertion. Growing up as a minority individual in a predominantly white community made him often feel estranged and somewhat out of place. He responded to the challenge by using his creative energy

anatomical drawings helping him answer who he was and where he fits. But his real artistic direction took shape only after he graduated and moved to Over The Rhine (OTR), downtown Cincinnati, to live. "Coming from the suburbs I was mesmerized by the graffiti on the sidewalks, on the buildings, by the coexistence of boarded up vacant houses side by side with palatial architecture," he says. "Some buildings were being rehabbed, others not, still wearing their history. There was a rhythm to the neighborhood, a dynamic pattern of shapes and forms, all like in a jazz symphony."

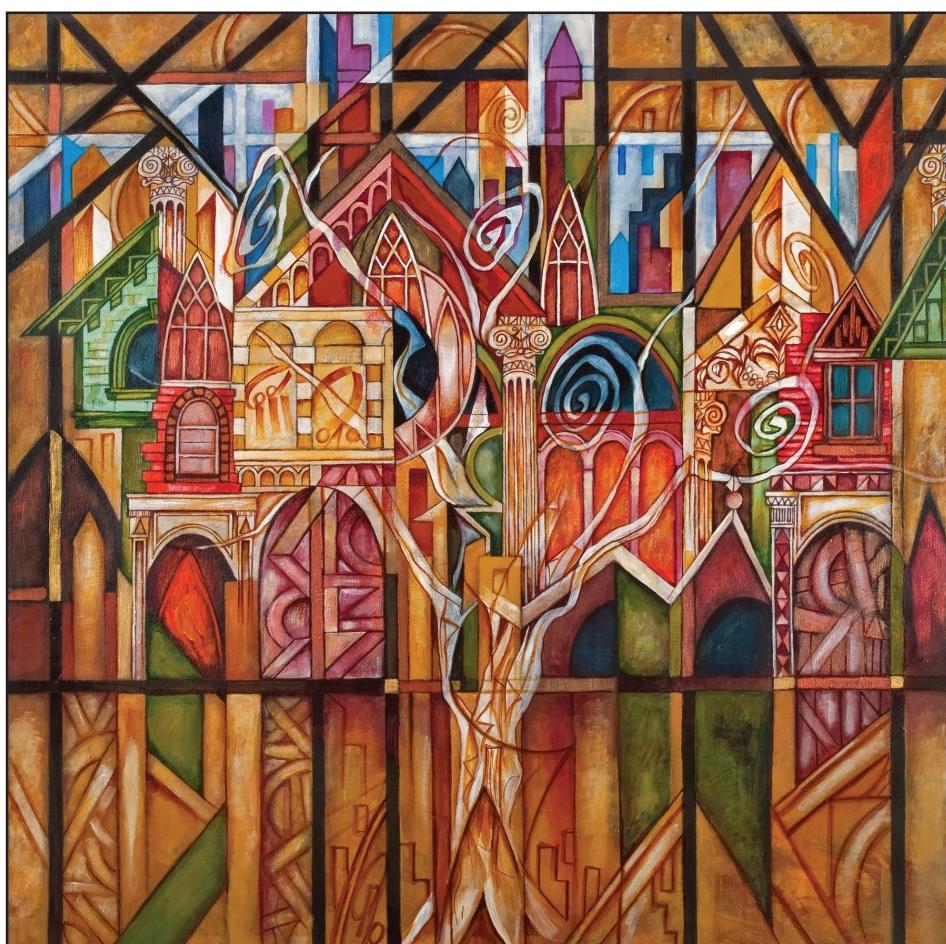
Cox, a musician himself, playing bass in a hard rock band, *Morticite*, since the age of 17, had been using music and songs all along to reflect on himself and his views. "In the band we write songs about injustice and prejudice, what affects us," he says, "also about human struggles, love, doing the right thing to other fellows, making this world a better place..."

He decided to put his visual art at the same service, to produce works that speak of his new neighborhood, its architecture, its beauty, its rich potential, emphasizing its positive, the goodness of its people, not only the bad that media usually portrays. By deconstructing and reinventing architectonic configurations he created densely fragmented abstract drawings and paintings that forced the viewer to step in, connect with their spirit and reexamine material culture.

His series *Underground* juxtaposes horizontally the 2 worlds of uptown and downtown OTR, uptown represented by the distant and somewhat cold cityscape, downtown by the boiling underground visceral reality of the neighborhood with its rich history and vibrant soul.

"I wanted my paintings to pay tribute to the area, to show what it is really about, its guts, its beauty, away from the stereotyped images of violence and decay usually associated with it," he says. "It was my attempt to empower it, also its inhabitants."

In *Horizon*, he connected directly with the urban architectural landscape of the place and its inner spiritual dimension. In his Mud Cloth drawings, related to the creation story and to Obatala, a deity central to the



White Oak on Elm, acrylic painting on canvas.
Painting and Photo by Cedric Cox.

to communicate, meet others and go beyond divisive prejudices.

During art school he produced work related to the African American experience and culture; he felt an obligation to do so. He was, however, at the same time constantly questioning how he could use his art to speak of himself, of his history, to become empowered, and empower others. He discovered his own voice studying internal anatomy, looking from the inside out, his



Cedric Cox in his studio. Photo by Bill Howes.

creation myth of the ancient Yoruba cultures of West Africa, he emphasized the role every individual plays in the creation act, in the betterment of this world, in his case, constructive contributions to OTR.

His painting *White Oak on Elm* shows in its center a tree overlapping and espousing various architectural details from OTR, columns, church windows, rooftops... He meant it as a symbol of rebirth and hope, a source of continual inspiration and faith. By its organic form contrasting with the linear geometric elements of architecture, the tree brought a human quality to the painting, connecting to Cox's feelings, experience and emotions about the neighborhood.

In addition to his art, Cox has also contributed to OTR as an organizer and an educator. With Robin Harrison, a filmmaker who had directed a documentary on the civil unrest of 2001, they produced *The Blast Urban Arts and Cultural Festivals*, bringing to the area events that showcased themed art exhibitions, popular art collections, films and music; they all intended to depict the local culture in a reputable, respectable way, making people aware of the richness of their heritage and diversity. At the same time he created *Art Shapes Us*, an art teaching program for high school and middle school students from various institutions and backgrounds; he also taught after-school art classes at the YMCA, served as a studio coordinator for Visionaries and Voices, volunteered as guest speaker at various elementary schools, participated in educational art projects at the Public Library, Art Museum, Contemporary Arts Center...

"I try to provide outlets and services to others, to lead them to positive change," Cox says. "Working with kids, I encourage them to follow their dream, reminding them that it can be achieved. I share with them my own struggles, my fears, my bad experiences, but also that with commitment, hard work and honesty, I am being rewarded, that good prevails, that inner beauty grows even in the midst of ugliness."

Cox perceives art as a tool of empowerment for himself and others. It helps him become a better person, persevere through difficulty, assert himself. His art comes from his heart, at the service of his life.

"My art is about beauty from within," he says. "It allows me to be the best I can be, to project my fullest human potential and share it with others in positive ways. I hope it can move others to realize their own dream. When I hear a song I like I always envision myself performing it on stage and sharing it with people I love so they too may be touched by it. I would like my art to resonate the same with the viewer."